

terrible issue. Leaving Eichard's mother to watch and pray for their safe return, they rode out from the Garde Bohe through Ludgate and Temple Bar, passed along the Strand, by the smouldering ruins of the Savoy, and about three o'clock drew rein where the Abbey of the Kings rose above the roofs of Westminster. They were met outside the doors by a sorrowful procession. The monks came in penitential garb bearing the cross before them. They had been disturbed and frightened by another violation of their sanctuary, similar to the murder of Haule in '78. Richard Imworth, warden of the Marshalsea prison, had fled for refuge to the abbey. He was known to all the gaol-birds of the neighbourhood as a * pitiless tormentor.' His prison had been destroyed when the mob occupied Southwark, and he himself now sought safety at the most sacred spot in England, the shrine of Edward the Confessor. He had fallen down to clasp the short marble pillars that then supported it, as they still support what is left of it to-day, and hoped that there, between the tombs of three Plantagenets, he might be left in peace. But the mob, headed by a parson from a distant Kentish village, burst into the abbey in full chase. The shrine, not then hidden by a screen, was visible from the bottom of the aisle. They mounted the steps with a rush, tore Imworth away from the pillars by main force, carried him back to the city, and struck off his head on the block in Cheapside.¹ After this experience of mob-rule the monks of Westminster came out with prayers and benedictions to welcome the representatives of order.

The King dismounted and kissed the cross they carried. The nobles, courtiers, and men-at-arms who were with him, overwrought by the sights and emotions of three days' hide-and-seek with death, burst into tears, which a week before or a week after they would have scorned to shed in public. Entering the church, they performed with unusual fervour the acts of piety which at such a moment appealed to them. The highest nobles of the land could be seen striving with knights and men-at-arms who should kneel closest to the shrines, who should first be allowed to kiss the relics which the Abbey contained. Bichard himself, after praying at the shrine whence Imworth had so lately been torn, confessed his

¹ Higden, ix. 4; *H. R.*, 518; *O. It. R.*, 483, Bex. 9; 484, Bex. 6 (Be>. **212**).